

Honorable Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Becky Stockton and I reside in Helena, Montana.

I come before you today in opposition to HB 30.

I have been an election judge & Chief Election judge for many years in the Helena area, so naturally I was interested in this bill that Rep. Frankie Wilmer has brought before this committee today and I have a few questions.

Why do adults have to be qualified electors to be an election judge and a youth does not? I think it is important to protect the integrity of the voting process by having registered voters as election judges. They have a vested interest in making sure the process is done legally & to make sure their vote & all of the electorate votes count.

I don't know what the child labor laws are for the State of Montana but if an election judge works for a full day, they can put up to 16 hours. Wouldn't a minor need to have parental consent to work as an election judge? And who would be in charge of the minors if they were working? And what if the minor needs to be disciplined for any illegal activities; who would be responsible? If a minor were to do something illegal while serving as an election judge would that compromise the integrity of the voting process? I also know that when minors do commit a crime they are impossible to prosecute, so to me this would interfere with the voting process.

Have you considered the ramifications of allowing a student to be absent from school all day? Will this be an excused or unexcused absent as set according to the funding laws.

There are several legal documents that election judges must sign & confirm regarding the seals on the voting envelopes. Can a minor sign a legal voting document in the State of Montana?

Would we be breeching any privacy laws by allowing minors to have access to the voting records in the precincts since they are not of voting age?

I depend on my mature adult electors to serve as election judges; to make quick & accurate decisions when handling unruly & disgruntled votes, poll watchers & petition gatherers. A lot of times I am taken away to handle special circumstances with voters & depend on my adult election judges to cover for me, if for some reason all my adults are handling other important circumstances, would you feel comfortable to put these minors in charge of mature adult situations and would this be legal under the child labor laws?

If a student is interested in the election process, I have no objection to them coming to the polls to watch how the election process is done. In fact, my children have done this many times & now are election judges.

The present law for election judges in the State of Montana work well. We do not need to any more legislation to complicate the voting process. Please vote no on HB 30.

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